Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

REPORTS OF BUREAUS OF LABOR STATISTICS.

Fifth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor. 1889. Railroad Labor. Carroll D. Wright. Washington. 1890. Pp. 888.

The Fifth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor deals with the subject of Railroad Labor. It represents the results of field work from April, 1888, to April, 1889. During this time returns were obtained from sixty corporations, employing 241,910 persons. This represents a trifle over one-third the entire number of railroad employees in the United States; and, as the roads were selected with great care from different sections and classes, the results are fairly representative of the general condition of things.

An investigation of railroad labor has several advantages over an investigation of factory labor. In the first place. there are no private establishments; all are corporations accustomed, to a greater or less degree, to public enquiry into their affairs. Their books are in better shape for such enquiry, and the attempts to resist it are less. There is comparatively little piece-work, which makes the investigation a good deal simpler. There is less fear of giving away trade secrets, or of enabling a rival to figure on the cost of production, than is the case among manufacturers. All these things combine to make the task of the enquirer easier, and the result more trustworthy.

Nearly four-fifths of the railroad employees of the United States are paid at rates between $1.00 and $2.00 per day. The percentages at different rates are as follows: —

Under $1.01, ...	7 3	per cent.
$1.01- 1.20, ...	21.7	"
1.21- 1.40, ...	21.6	"
1.41- 1.60, ...	15.1	"
1.61- 1.80, ...	11.4	"
1.81- 2.00, ...	9.2	"
Over 2.00, ...	13.7	"

The average daily rate received by all persons was $1.64½; but this, of course, was brought up by a comparatively small number who receive very high rates, for nearly two-thirds of the total number receive less than this average. An examination of the different groups of employees shows that "laborers," switchmen, and telegraph operators are, as a rule, paid from $1.00 to $1.50 a day; firemen and brakemen mostly about $1.75, the rates varying from $1.50 to $2.00; while the classes receiving more than $2.00 per day are blacksmiths, carpenters, machinists, conductors, and engineers, and also a considerable group of switchmen, especially in the west.

One of the most extraordinary features in the whole situation is the small figure of time employed. "Laborers" are employed on an average less than 100 days in the year; brakemen and firemen a little over 150; telegraph operators, 164; switchmen, 176. Conductors are employed 207 days on an average, and engineers 237. This results from a combination of two causes. Part of it is due to the migratory character of railroad labor, as Colonel Wright expresses it; part to the fact that in some lines of work a considerable number of days of rest are needed. For instance, train crews on the best roads are kept steadily through the year but work only four days in the week, with occasional Sunday duty extra. From 210 to 240 days in the year, to a conductor or engineer, means steady employment, and represents his full annual earning power. On the other hand, the laborer works six days in the week as long as he has a job, and then goes somewhere else. His figures of annual earnings, taken from the books of the company, represent only a fraction of what he really gets. These two causes are so intermingled that it is hard to separate them, and they make the figures of annual earnings somewhat misleading. We give them, nevertheless, for what they are worth.

Occupations.	Total Persons.	Average Earnings.
Baggagemasters (36 roads)	1,260	$394
Baggagemen (18 roads)	1,014	311
Blacksmiths (43 roads)	1,718	467
Brakemen (58 roads)	23,699	212
Carpenters (51 roads)	8,583	330
Conductors (56 roads)	6,134	575
Engineers (55 roads)	5,540	957
Enginemen (15 roads)	1,351	787
Firemen (60 roads)	9,672	337
Flagmen (31 roads)	2,111	244
Foremen (56 roads)	7,086	463
Laborers (58 roads)	90,104	124
Machinists (40 roads)	4,984	431
Masons (28 roads)	874	227
Painters (38 roads)	1,750	348
Switchmen (30 roads)	4,262	264
Telegraph operators (38 roads)	4,216	235

A much more important table is that which shows the wages paid in different sections of the country to different classes of employees.

	New England.	Middle.	South Atlantic.	Cen. Northern.	Northwestern.	Southwestern.	Pacific.
Baggagemasters	$1.78	$1.58	$1.32	$1.46	$1.10	$1.79	$2.00
Baggagemen	1.67	1.46	1.42	1.61	1.49	1.55	1.94
Blacksmiths	2.36	2.06	2.39	2.25	2.67	2.26	3.11
Brakemen	1.80	1.73	1.26	1.86	1.95	1.75	1.96
Carpenters	2.14	1.89	2.10	1.92	2.32	2.14	3.07
Conductors	2.82	2.54	2.58	2.61	2.92	2.85	3.00
Engineers	3.32	3.15	2.91	3.07	3.55	2.79	....
Enginemen	3.24	3.20	1.52	2.27	....	....	....
Firemen	1.89	1.72	1.29	1.79	2.04	1.90	....
Flagmen	1.24	1.16	.89	.97	....	1.02	1.64
Foremen	2.33	1.81	1.66	1.81	1.88	1.78	2.46
Laborers	1.51	1.23	.88	1.21	1.21	1.30	1.87
Machinists	2.23	2.05	2.70	2.25	2.69	2.43	3.06
Masons	2.19	2.44	3.00	2.76	2.54	3.00	....
Painters	2.01	1.88	2.02	1.91	2.42	1.72	2.81
Switchmen	1.78	1.27	1.11	1.53	2.30	2.15	2.20
Telegraph Operators	1.42	1.34	1.50	1.47	1.67	1.38	2.09

It is not surprising to find that the highest wages are paid on the Pacific coast; but it will surprise many readers that the next highest wages, for distinctively railroad labor, are paid in New England. It is interesting to see that while blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, painters, and machinists are paid more per day in the west, baggagemasters and hands, conductors and engineers, on the whole, do quite as well in New England, and railroad laborers very much better.

Amid the many things to praise in the report there are comparatively few to criticise. The worst is probably the comparison of American and English railroad wages. The English wages are from employees' returns. It is always an error to compare employees' returns in one place with employers' returns in another; and in this instance the returns of English wages appear to have been made up with some unfairness. The places where high wages are paid have been carefully excluded, and the low ones carefully selected. For instance, there are no returns from any London terminal station, and only one from an important suburban station. By a curious blunder one really first-class London station is included in the list, but *no returns at all* are given from it. We are astonished that this did not awaken Colonel Wright's suspicions.

The only other serious mistake we have noted, and that probably an oversight, is the occasional calculations of annual earnings on assumed full time instead of actual time,—for instance, on page 144.

It may have been difficult to use the figures of actual time in the way suggested; in that case it would have been better to compare only the wages per day, and omit the table of annual earnings altogether. It is certainly misleading to speak of the annual earnings of an engineer as $1,000 when, as a matter of fact, he can only earn three-quarters of that amount in steady employment at full regular time.

ARTHUR T. HADLEY.

YALE UNIVERSITY.

INDIANA.— *Second* Biennial Report (Eighth Volume) of the Department of Statistics 1887–88.* Wm. A. Peelle, Jr., Commissioner. Indianapolis. 1888.

IOWA.—*Third Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics 1888–89.* E. R. Hutchins, Commissioner. Des Moines. 1889. Pp. cxiii, 440.

KANSAS.— *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor and Industrial Statistics. 1889.* Frank H. Betton, Commissioner. Topeka. 1890. Pp. 407.

MICHIGAN.— *Eighth Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor and Industrial Statistics.* A. H. Heath, Commissioner. Lansing. 1891. Pp. vviii, 451.

MINNESOTA.— *Second Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. 1889–90.* John Lamb, Commissioner. Minneapolis. 1891. Pp. 377.

MISSOURI.— *Twelfth Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. 1890.* Lee Meriwether, Commissioner. Jefferson City. 1890. Pp. 569, 141.

PENNSYLVANIA.— *Annual Report of the Secretary of Internal Affairs. Part III. Industrial Statistics. Vol. XVII. 1889.* Albert S. Bolles, Chief of Bureau. Harrisburg. 1890.

---

* A letter from Commissioner Peelle announces that the Third Biennial Report is in press and will soon be ready for distribution.